



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Eastern Interior Field Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In Reply Refer To: AKFF085068 (292803) & AKFF088231 (292006)

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION /PLAN CONFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION AND DECISION

DOI-BLM-AK-F0200-2014-0007-CX

Proposed Action: Preacher Creek Cleanup

Date of Proposed Action: June 1, 2014 through May 1, 2015

Location: Preacher Creek
Section 31, T10N, R9E, Fairbanks Meridian
Section 32, T11N, R10E, Fairbanks Meridian

Applicant: DOI-BLM-FDO-EIFO

Serial Number: AKFF085068 (292803) & AKFF088231 (292006)

Description of Proposed Action:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will remove and dispose of solid waste from unauthorized use sites along Preacher Creek. The sites are located within the Steese National Conservation Area, approximately 40 miles north of milepost 75 of the Steese Highway. A helicopter will be utilized for site access and sling load operations. Any solid waste that cannot be removed via sling load will be staged for winter removal using snowmachines and sleds. Some vegetation may be cleared to create a helicopter landing area. No surface disturbance is anticipated outside of the solid waste removal actions.

Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Steese National Conservation Area Land Use Plan/Record of Decision

Date Approved/Amended: February 6, 1986

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Improve the water quality of Birch Creek National Wild River.

Goal 3: Manage lands consistent with multiple use principles and maintenance, of environmental quality.

Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with BLM Handbook 1790-1, Appendix 4 (J) (10), which states “Removal of structures and materials of no historical value, such as abandoned automobiles, fences, and buildings, including those built in trespass and reclamation of the site when little or no surface disturbance is involved.”

The proposed action must be screened against the extraordinary circumstances found in 43 CFR 46.215 and listed below. Any “yes” finding requires that an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for the Proposed Action.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
1) May have significant impacts on public health or safety.	No
2) May have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	No
3) May have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.	No
4) May have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	No
5) Might establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	No
6) May have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	No
7) May have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.	No
8) May have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	No
9) Might violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	No
10) May have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	No
11) Might limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	No
12) Could contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).	No

Recommendation

I have found that the Proposed Action is compatible with the Steese National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan, and is an action that can be categorically excluded. The Proposed Action does not trigger any of the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 516 DM Chapter 2, Appendix 2. I recommend that the Proposed Action be allowed and that an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement is not needed.

\s\ Rebecca Hile
Rebecca Hile, Physical Scientist
Eastern Interior Field Office

06/20/2014
Date

Concurrence

I concur that the above action is in conformance with the Steese National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan, does not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances, and qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion.

\s\Michele Ethun for
Lenore Heppler
Field Manager
Eastern Interior Field Office

06/20/2014
Date

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Rebecca Hile, Physical Scientist, Eastern Interior Field Office, at 907-474-2371.

**Decision for Categorical Exclusion
DOI-BLM-AK-F0200-2014-0007-CX
Preacher Creek Cleanup**

Decision

It is my decision to cleanup sites along Preacher Creek. Preacher Creek is a major tributary to Birch Creek National Wild River.

Rationale

1. This action is in accordance with Goals 1 & 3 of the Steese National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan.
2. Completing cleanup from trespass activities is important to the health of the environment and all that visit the Steese National Conservation Area.
3. Removal actions will protect the water quality of tributaries of Birch Creek.
4. There are no anticipated impacts to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). See attachment **
5. There are no anticipated impacts to cultural resources. See attachment **
6. The Proposed Action will not significantly restrict subsistence uses. See attachment **

Appeal Procedures

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, in accordance with 43 CFR Part 4 and DOI Form 1842-1. The notice of appeal must be filed in the Bureau of Land Management Eastern Interior Field Office (at the above address) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. Appeals from administrative decisions issued by BLM-Alaska must be filed in writing in the office of the deciding official, either by mail or hand delivery. Notices of appeal transmitted by electronic means, such as facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted as timely filed.

\s\ Michele Ethun for
Lenore Heppler
Field Manager
Eastern Interior Field Office

06/20/2014
Date

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review and decision, contact Rebecca Hile, Physical Scientist, Eastern Interior Field Office, at 907-474-2371.